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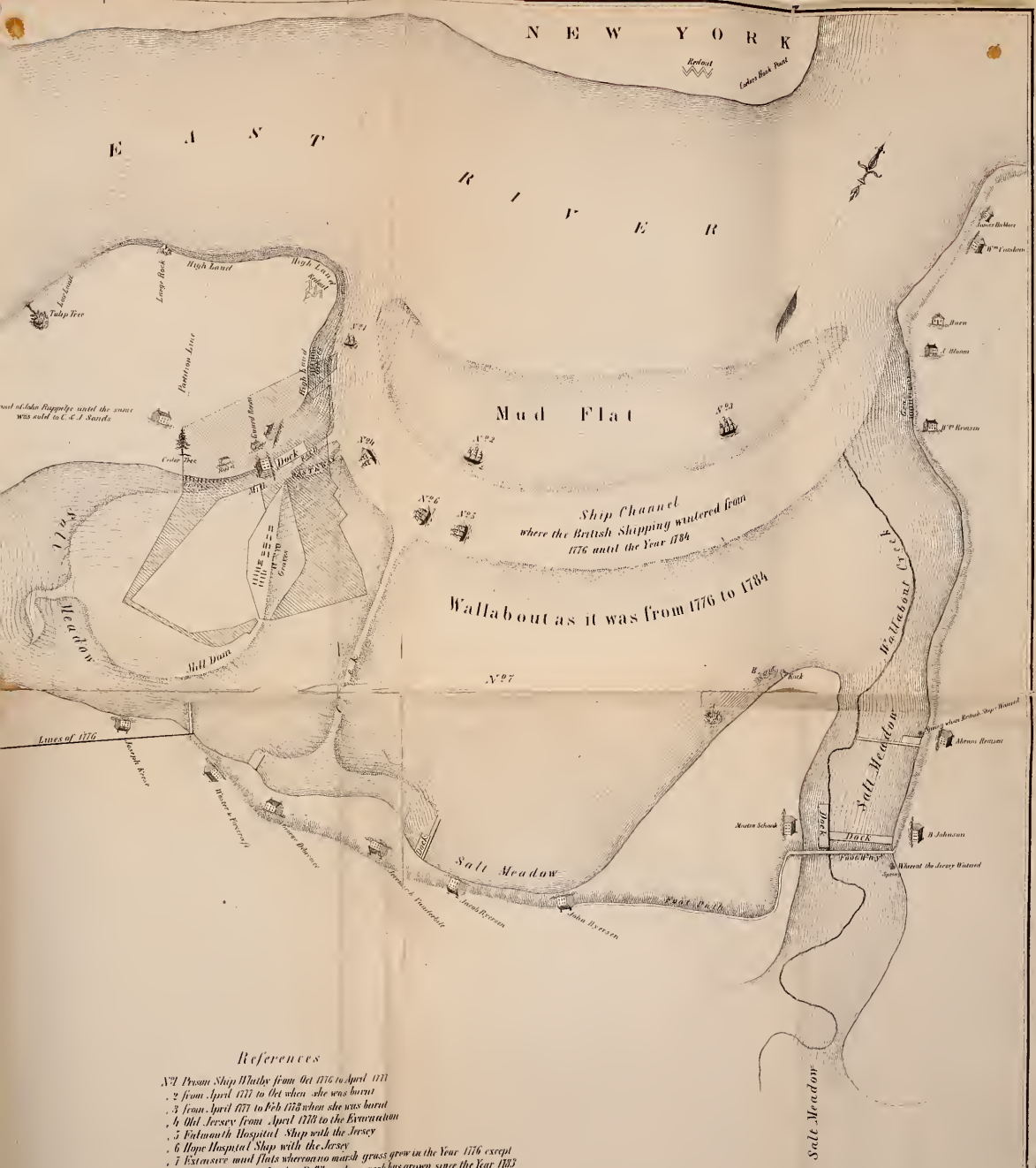
MARTYRS

TO THE

REVOLUTION.


NEW YORK
Redout
Cedars Rock Point
EAST
RIVER
Mud Flat
Ship Channel
where the British Shipping wintered from
1776 until the Year 1784
Wallabout as it was from 1776 to 1784
Wallabout Creek
Salt Meadow
Mill Dam
Lines of 1776
Dock
Tulip Tree
Cedar Tree
Barn
Salt Meadow
Salt Meadow
Salt Meadow
Dock
Dock
Dock

MARTYRS

TO THE REVOLUTION

IN THE

BRITISH PRISON-SHIPS

IN THE

WALLABOUT BAY.

By
Wm. Taylor 1820

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INTRODUCTION.

The truth has recently found notice, that there has been gathered beneath no monumental pile, the dust of those hundreds upon hundreds of our fathers, who, by their heroic patriotism and daring love of liberty, were impelled, in the great crisis in our country's history, to serve in our then infant navy; and who, through British cruelty, were sacrificed to the sacred cause of that Revolution, in prison-ships in the Wallabout Bay! The fact has come to engage attention, that, for seventy-five years, Americans have reaped, in almost thoughtless joy, their harvests of gold, from a soil, the producing vigor of which is in the ashes of those martyrs, without the wonderful truths connected with their inheritance adequately resting in their understandings, and with no worthy degree of gratitude expressed, in written record or enduring memorial, of those who thus, for the end set before them—the good and glory of their country—counted not their lives dear unto them!

Upon the shores of the Wallabout, in the sands of which lie whatever is unscattered of the remains of those worthies, a movement has begun, designed to redeem the obligation, with

respect to them, which neglect in the past has entailed upon this generation. Americans associated, in the County of Kings, by representation in a Convention, sought and obtained needed information in the premises, and have formed and organized a Board of Direction, to act efficiently in this great interest. At their instance, George Taylor, Esq., of the City of Brooklyn, prepared, and furnished for such use as might be deemed best to subserve the undertaking, the Address which these remarks are intended by the Committee on Publication to introduce.

BRITISH PRISON-SHIPS.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

The story of the Prisons in the City of New-York, and of the Prison-Ships in the Whallabocht Bay, during the war for our Independence, is the darkest in the history of our Revolutionary struggle. War, at all times dreadful, here assumed its most fearful character. Occasional acts of inhumanity and cowardly brutality, committed in the heat of battle, when the thirst for blood is whetted by its indulgence, may be excused, as the temporary triumph of passion and vengeance over reason and humanity; but for the cold, calculating cruelty, regularly adopted, and steadily pursued towards our unfortunate countrymen, there was no excuse. The voice of civilization and human-

ity cried out against it; and the results proved that an insulted Providence frowned upon it with fearful indignation.

Savage nations sometimes put their prisoners to death; but this has never been openly practiced by the civilized nations of the earth. The custom of the cultivated nations of antiquity, of selling their prisoners into slavery, met the most positive reprobation in the beginning of the Feudal Ages; and the system of ransom which was then adopted, yielded, early in the Seventeenth Century, to the more liberal and humane policy of exchange of prisoners under *cartels*. Until that exchange took place, the law of nations, as well as the principles of humanity, required the belligerent parties to provide proper accommodations for their prisoners, and to supply them with healthy food, and, in case of sickness, with proper medical attendance. How England observed these rules, in the case of our imprisoned countrymen, the civilized nations of the world may judge.

The battle of Brooklyn, and the capture of Fort Washington, in the fall of 1776, put the British in possession of nearly *four thousand prisoners;* and by the arrest of citizens supposed to sympathize with the patriots, they soon increased the number to *five thousand.* Our enemies were now compelled to adopt the system of parole, or to turn all the public and other large buildings in New-York into prisons for their reception. Their feelings of humanity, as well as their cowardly policy, led them to adopt the latter course! The churches, and sugar-houses, and prisons, were crowded with the unfortunate patriots to such an extent, in some instances, that there was not space for them to lie down to rest. And among them, they threw their own criminals, vile wretches gathered from the purlieus of their large cities, as if they were fit associates for men whose only crime had been love of country and of liberty. But this moral pestilence did not suffice to gratify their malice; for into these crowded prisons they

scattered the seeds of disease and death. The prisoners were poorly fed, on worm-eaten bread, and peas, and putrid beef, which, not unfrequently, they were compelled to eat in its raw state; and the more surely to accomplish the objects contemplated, those sick with small-pox and infectious fevers were left among them unattended, without medicines to relieve them, or water to cool their parched lips. Denied the light and air of heaven, and starved by their inhuman keepers, and broken-hearted by the supplications and groans of their distressed kindred and countrymen, they sickened and died, and were thrown like dogs into their native soil, unless it happened to be the good pleasure of Cunningham, their infamous jailer, to march them out under the cover of midnight darkness, to the gallows and the grave. "The mode of these private executions was thus conducted," says the miserable wretch Cunningham, in his confession, at his own execution for crime soon after the close of the war: "a guard was dispatched from the Pro-

vost, about half-past twelve at night, to the Barrack-street and the neighborhood of the upper barracks, to order the people to shut their window-shutters and put out their lights, forbidding them at the same time to presume to look out of their windows and doors on pain of death; after which the unfortunate prisoners were conducted, gagged, just behind the upper barracks, and hung without ceremony, and buried by the black pioneer of the Provost." In this manner, there were about two hundred and sixty American prisoners murdered without cause, and in violation of every law, human and Divine.

While Cunningham was committing these horrid deeds, as a matter of private speculation or revenge, and by the orders of his superiors, other monsters were preparing the instruments of destruction on this side of the river. The vessels which they had previously converted into prison-ships, at Gravesend Bay, were now removed to the Hudson and East Rivers, where they were anchored for

the same purposes. The soldiers taken prisoners on Long Island, and confined in these vessels, were transferred to the prisons in New-York, to make room for the marine prisoners, now rapidly accumulating.

About the 20th day of October, 1776, the Whitby, a large transport, was removed to the Whallabocht Bay, and moored opposite "Remsen's Mill," as shown on the map. She was the first prison-ship moored in the Whallabocht, and was crowded with prisoners when she arrived. Many prisoners from the army, and citizens arrested on suspicion, were confined in her, which was not the case with the other prison-ships. The Whitby was said to be the most sickly of *all* the hulks. While this appears almost impossible, facts justify the assertion. She was the only prison-ship in the Bay until May, 1777; and during two months in the spring of that year the entire beach, between the ravine and Remsen's Dock, was filled with graves; and before the first day of May, the ravine itself was filled with the remains of the hundreds

Johnson's Account.

who died from pestilence, or were starved to death in this dreadful prison.

In May, 1777, two more ships were anchored in the Whallabocht, and the prisoners of the Whitby were transferred to them; but the same causes made them almost as sickly as their predecessor. At this time, no exchanges took place, but *death* made room for the daily arrivals. On a Sunday afternoon, about the middle of October, 1777, one of these vessels was burnt, and many prisoners perished in the flames. A second was consumed in February, 1778. These were succeeded by others—the Good Hope, Scorpion, Prince of Wales, John, Falmouth, Hunter, Stromboli, and Old Jersey, all of which were used in this disgraceful service. And in them thousands of our unfortunate countrymen suffered and died from the inhuman treatment received from the English. So great was their suffering, that they were induced to set fire to the ships, which were burnt, hoping thus either to secure their liberty, or hasten their death.

Johnson's Account.

"Better the greedy wave should swallow all,
Better to meet the death-conducting ball,
Better to sleep on ocean's oozy bed,
At once destroyed and numbered with the dead,
Than thus to perish in the face of day,
Where twice ten thousand deaths one death delay."

Freneau.

While one of these ships was in flames, the prisoners were seen letting each other down from the port-holes and decks into the water. How many perished in the hulks is unknown, except to the All-knowing, who witnessed their sufferings, and registered their wrongs.

But of all these terrible prison-ships, the Old Jersey, the "Hell," as she was called, was the most notorious. She was originally a sixty-four gun-ship, which had become unfit for actual service. After a battle with the French fleet, in which she was much injured, she was dismantled, her spars and rigging removed, and her figure-head taken to repair another ship. Thus, without ornament, an old, unsightly hulk, whose dark and filthy external appearance fitly represented the death and despair that reigned within,

Andros's Account, page 8.

she was anchored in April, 1778, in the Whallabocht Bay, for the reception of prisoners, and to hide between her decks crimes too horrid for the eye of day---crimes which must forever remain a black spot and a shame on the pages of English history.

For the purposes of a prison-ship, she was stripped of every thing warlike; and the bowsprit, which was used as a derrick for taking in supplies, was all that was left on deck. Her port-holes were closed and fastened, and four small holes, about twenty inches square, were cut in her sides for the admission of air. These holes, about ten feet apart, were secured by strong iron bars, crossing each other at right angles. While they "admitted the light by day, and served as breathing holes at night," their arrangement did not permit a free current of air between decks, where the prisoners were confined from sun-down to sun-rise, having little or no communication with the upper deck during these dismal hours. Dring's Narrative.

Her position was nearly opposite the

mouth of the old mill-race, and about three hundred yards from the shore. South-east of her, at the distances of two and three hundred yards, the Falconer, Good Hope, and Hunter, were anchored. These were called hospital-ships, but the sick were seldom removed to them, until past all hope of recovery, and then it was an aggravation, not a relief, to the unfortunate sufferers. In fact, the idea of a hospital-ship was a mockery; for the prisoners were suffered to sicken and die without the least sympathy or attention. The festering plague-spots, called hospital-ships, were kept upon the Bay probably for the sake of an historical record, but certainly not for the purposes of humanity. The Old Jersey was the receiving ship in this death-recruiting station, and the hospital-ships were the *places* where they were sowed up in blankets, preparatory to an honorable, but not very humane, discharge from the service. Sick or well, the prisoners were abandoned to their fate. During the period of Andros's confinement, no English physician was seen

Dring's Narrative. Johnson's Account.

Andros, page 15.

on the hulks; and others testify to the same cruel neglect.

"All the most deadly diseases were pressed into the service of the king of terrors; dysentery, small-pox, and yellow-fever, acting as prime ministers. * * * The whole ship, from her keel to the taffrail, was equally affected, and contained pestilence sufficient to desolate a world; disease and death were wrought into her very timbers."

The appearance of the Old Jersey as she lay in the Whallabocht, is graphically described by Capt. Dring. Leaving New-York, together with 130 prisoners, brought in by the British ship Belisarius, he proceeded to the place of their imprisonment under the charge of the notorious David Sproat, Commissary of Prisoners. "We at length doubled the Point," he says, "and came in view of the Wallabout, where lay before us the black hulk of the Old Jersey, with her satellites, the three hospital ships, to which Sproat pointed in an exulting manner, and said, 'There, Rebels, there is the cage for

Dring's Narrative, p. 26.

you!' * * As he spoke, my eye was instantly turned from the dreaded hulk; but a single glance had shown us a multitude of human beings moving upon her upper deck. It was then nearly sun-set, and before we were alongside, every man, except the sentinels on the gangway, had disappeared. Previous to their being sent below, some of the prisoners, seeing us approaching, waved their hats, as if they would say, approach us not; and we soon found fearful reason for the warning." While waiting along-side for orders, some of the prisoners addressed them through the air-holes, which we have described. One of them said, "that it is a lamentable thing to see so many young men in full strength, with the flush of health upon their countenances, about to enter that infernal place of abode. Death, he said, had no relish for such skeleton carcases as we are; but he will now have a feast upon you fresh comers." The 130 new comers were registered and sent below; but they could not sleep, the intolerable heat and foul air

was too much for endurance. They sought the air-holes, but these were occupied; and the law of self-preservation appeared to justify the parties in keeping possession. The crowded condition of the hulk prevented them from moving about, so that they were forced to sit down half suffocated and wait the coming of the morning. Thus they passed the first dreadful night, with sorrowful forebodings of the approaching day, which was destined to present new scenes of wretchedness and woe, in the crowd of strange and unknown forms, with the lines of death and famine upon their faces.

> "On every side, dire objects met the sight,
> And pallid forms, and murders of the night."

The prisoners were confined on the two lower decks; the foreign prisoners generally in the lower one. It appears that they were, if possible, more cruelly treated than the Americans. This cannot be accounted for, unless through some local feeling, for it was contrary to the course generally pursued by the English. A marked distinction was

made between the prisoners confined at Plymouth, in England. The Americans were treated with less humanity than the French and Spanish, and were allowed only half the quantity of bread per day. Their petitions for relief, offered by Mr. Fox, in the House of Commons, and by the Duke of Richmond, in the House of Lords, were treated with contempt; while the French and Spanish had few or no complaints to make. But in the Old Jersey, they were covered with rags and dirt, and appeared to be past all feeling or expectation of escape. Broken, crushed by the iron heel of despotism,—neglected, forgotten, they had no hope to cheer them.

British Annual Reg. 1781, p. 152.

There are few who could have avoided similar feelings of indifference to life, under such appalling circumstances. It was almost foolish to look forward for relief, or escape. If they succeeded in scaling the barricade which surrounded the deck, they only exposed themselves to the deadly fire of the guards, or to the risk of being cut to pieces before reach-

ing the shore. Many poor fellows tried this experiment, and paid the forfeiture of their lives in the attempt.

The guards were forbidden, under pain of severe punishment, to relieve the wants of the distressed; and, in this particular, disobedience was never known. Their's was the law of the Medes and the Persians, which knew no change, and admitted no appeal.

The petitions of the suffering and sick were frequently answered with the foot or the bayonet. William Burke, from Newport, Delaware, says, that he was confined in the Old Jersey fourteen months, and that he saw, among other cruelties, many American prisoners put to death by the bayonet. This cruel treatment was never in the least relaxed by the English or Scotch; but, sometimes, the more humane Hessians evinced pity for the unfortunate sufferers. During the hot weather, the prisoners were admitted, one at a time, on deck through the night. When this great privilege was granted, they

Hist of the Martyrs, p. 89

assembled in a crowd around the grate at the hatchway, for the purpose of getting fresh air, and to take their turn to go on deck. Frequently, when this was the case, the sentinels would thrust their bayonets down among them with the most wanton cruelty. Twenty-five were thus butchered in one night. Other witnesses speak of four, six, eight, and ten victims thus murdered at different times. The suffering from thirst during the hot nights was intense, but it was extremely dangerous to approach the port-hole to ascend for water. "Provoked by the continual cry for leave to ascend, when there was already one on deck, the sentry would push them back with the bayonet." By one of those thrusts, which was more spiteful and violent than common, Andros barely escaped with his life.

Andros's Account, p 14.

On the 4th day of July, 1782, the prisoners suffered the most brutal treatment, because they presumed to remember the birth-day of our Independence. Their little banners were torn down and trampled under

Dring's Narrative.

foot by the guard; and, for the crime of singing a few patriotic songs, they were driven, at the point of the bayonet, below deck, long before the usual hour. Such music had no charms for the Scotch guard on duty. The spirit of liberty found no response in their breasts. The heroes and heroism of their native Highlands had been forgotten in the trade of war. The voice of suffering, and the eloquence of death, made no impression on their hardened hearts. After they had been sent below, and the hatches were closed, the prisoners thought that they might, without giving further offence, cheer each other up by a few songs of affection for their bleeding country. But this privilege was refused them; and because they did not instantly heed that refusal, the guards went down among them, with lanterns in one hand and cutlasses in the other, and, driving the crowd of defenceless victims before them, they cut and wounded all within their reach. Then, to gratify their hellish feelings, they closed the hatches and left the wounded

and dying, in darkness, without the least means of dressing their wounds, or stopping the flow of blood. Still further to aggravate the sufferings of this dreadful night, the poor allowance of food and water was denied, and their dying petitions were mocked by those cruel monsters. Ten mangled and lifeless bodies were turned out in the morning, a most gratifying evidence to the guards, that their brave attack upon the unarmed and the sick, had been successful.

This act of fiendish brutality was equalled, if not surpassed, by the commander of the Stromboli. The treatment of the prisoners on this ship was so intolerable that it produced a revolt, in which many of the prisoners were either killed or wounded. But order was soon restored, and the dead and dying were thrown upon deck. One poor fellow, lying almost exhausted by a mortal wound, begged of the Captain, "for God's sake to give him a little water, for he was dying." The brave officer, placing a light before him, exclaimed: "What! is it you—

Talbot's Life.

damn you! take that, you damn'd rebel rascal," and dashed his foot into the face of the dying man! And he took it, and, dying, bore this insult to humanity, fresh to the throne of a just and an avenging God.

During the imprisonment of Talbot, there were eleven hundred prisoners in the Jersey, which was the number usually confined in her, without berths to lie down on, or benches to sit upon, and many of them were almost naked. The allowance of clothing was scanty, and its quality outrageous, and the conduct of the guards as brutal as it was possible for it to be; while dysentery, fever, small-pox, and the recklessness of despair, filled the hulk with filth of the most disgusting character. In such a place, the mingled sick, and dying, and dead, presented a scene too horrible to contemplate, and from which the coldest heart must have turned away.

But every spark of humanity had fled from the breasts of their guards. The only sympathy ever received, was from the Hes-

sians when they were on duty, and that was but little. The English and Scotch seemed to vie with each other in their refined cruelty, and were as little moved by these scenes of suffering and death, as the ship's timbers which surrounded the prisoners, or the bayonets by which they were so unnecessarily wounded.

> "At every post some surly vagrant stands,
> Cull'd from the English or the Scottish bands,
> Dispensing death."

Old Jersey Captive. p. 16.

"The lower hold and the orlop deck were such a terror, that no man would venture down into them. Humanity would have dictated a more merciful treatment to a band of pirates, who had been condemned and were only awaiting the gibbet, than to have sent them here." But, in the view of the English, the prisoners were rebels and traitors. They had risen against the mother country in an unjust and wanton civil war, and were receiving the just punishment of their rebellion.

In 1782, when Alexander Coffin was sent a prisoner on board of the Old Jersey, he found about *eleven hundred* prisoners there, many of whom, during the severity of the winter, were without clothing to keep them warm. To remedy this difficulty, they were compelled to keep below, and either get into their hammocks, or walk the deck, which was almost impossible. In this way, they could keep from freezing, by using great efforts, but it was not always done. We have an account of one poor fellow whose feet and legs were frozen. Mr. Sherburne saw the toes and flesh fall from his feet, while the nurse was dressing them.

Hist. of the Martyrs, page 29.

Sherburne's Memoirs, page 118.

To cap the climax of infamy, Coffin says, they fed the prisoners on putrid beef and pork, and worm-eaten bread, which had been condemned on their ships of war. It was full of vermin, but they had to eat it, worms and all, or starve. On the upper gun-deck, hogs were kept in pens for the use of the officers. When they were fed with bran, the prisoners would steal it from the trough,

Jersey Capt. p. 17

and, after boiling it, would eat it with as good an appetite as the hogs themselves.

They were sometimes denied the use of fire, for several days in succession, and were thus compelled to eat their meat raw. When fire was allowed, it was confined to a large copper boiler, which had been corroded by the use of salt water. Into this poisonous place, they were compelled to put their meat, and to take it out again at a particular time, whether cooked or not. To the use of this corroded boiler, and the filthy bilge-water which they drank in the absence of better, Capt. Dring attributed much of their sickness. Light was not permitted at night, and the hulk was so crowded, that the prisoners could not move without treading upon each other. Their rest was broken by the groans of the sick and dying, and by the curses poured out upon their inhuman keepers by those who had been driven into delirium by the suffocating heat and poisoned air. The dying, in their last convulsive agonies, frequently threw themselves across

their sick companions; and, as the sick were unable to remove the lifeless bodies, they were compelled to wait until morning, with their comrades stretched upon their own exhausted frames.

Andrew Sherburne was removed from the Old Jersey to the hospital-ship Weymouth, where he found the brothers, John and Abraham Fall. The Falls were lying sick on the same cot, not far from the one he occupied, but they were not able to visit each other. The sick in the hospital-ships were too feeble to help themselves, and the nurses took more interest in their death, than they did in relieving their wants. Their clothing and blankets, however poor, were a sufficient reward for their neglect, and generally overcame their feelings of humanity. When present, they spent their time in playing cards, while the suffering prisoners were imploring them for water, or some other little attention. But, generally, they were out of the way, and left the sick to take care of themselves. One night, when thus left alone,

Sherburne's Memoirs, page 118

Abraham Fall plead with his brother John to get off from him; and the sick around swore at John for his cruelty in lying on his brother; but John made no reply, he was deaf to the cries of his brother, and beyond the curses of the suffering crowd. In the morning, he was found dead; and his brother Abraham, whose exhausted strength had given way under the pressure of the corpse, was in a dying state. The sick were unable to relieve them, and the *nurses* were not there.

Dring's Narrative, page 84.

Captain Dring describes the case of a poor boy, only twelve years old, confined with him on the Old Jersey. The little fellow had been inoculated for the small-pox, which disease the English had adopted as an ally in their humane care of the prisoners. "The boy was a member of the same mess with myself," Dring says, "and had always looked upon me as a protector, and particularly so during his sickness. The night of his death was truly a wretched one to me; for I spent almost the whole of it in perfect

darkness, holding him during his convulsions; and it was heart-rending to hear the screams of the dying boy, while calling and imploring, in his delirium, for the assistance of his mother and other members of his family. For a long time, all persuasion or argument was useless to silence his groans and supplications. But exhausted nature, at length, sunk under its agonies; his screams became less piercing, and his struggles less violent. In the midnight gloom of our dungeon, I could not see him die, but knew, by placing my hand over his mouth, that his breathings were becoming shorter; and thus felt the last breath as it quitted his frame. The first glimmer of morning light through the iron grate fell upon his pallid and lifeless corpse." This was the end, the result contemplated, by the British in their brutal conduct. Nothing was left untried that could injure or destroy. They warred on decrepid old age—on defenceless youth. They committed hostilities against professors of literature and the ministers of religion—against public records

Gov. Livingston's Address, N. J., 1777

and private manuscripts, books of improvement, and papers of curiosity. They butchered the wounded, asking for quarter; mangled the dead, weltering in their blood, and refused them the rites of sepulture; suffered prisoners to perish for want of sustenance; insulted the persons of females; and, in their barbarism, profaned edifices dedicated to Almighty God.

The wife of a dying prisoner was not permitted to see him expire; and because she wept in her distress, the infamous Cunningham had her stripped and unmercifully punished. But, Cunningham and David Sproat were not the only monsters in the British service. A sailor, more humane than his Royal Captain who wore the insignia of British military honor, discovering that Gavot, of Rhode Island, who had been sewed up in his hammock, and thrown out among the dead, was still living, called the attention of his commander to the fact. The courageous and humane captain replied, "In with him; if he is not dead, he soon

will be." But, honor to the noble tar, he refused to bury the living, and with his knife ripped open the hammock, and loosed him from the shackles of the grave. Let the name of that commander be ascertained and erased from the roll of humanity. As he was destitute of all principle and feeling, let him be no longer called—Man.

At sun-down, the prisoners were ordered below deck. "Down, rebels, down," was the elegant language of their guards; and in the morning, after the sufferings of the night, its long, anxious and painful watches, its untold agonies, and unnumbered deaths, the "Rebels" were commanded, in tones of derision, to "turn out their dead." And the dead were turned out from the living, motion, not appearance, frequently determining the selection, and were sewed up in their blankets, and carried by their companions, under a guard, to the shore, and there hastily buried. This was done so carelessly and hastily, that each succeeding tide washed out some of their remains. The corpses

Dring's Narrative, p. 79.

were laid in the trenches without ceremony, and the sand hastily and thinly thrown over them, while the remains of those previously interred with the same mockery, were exposed to view. More than half of the dead buried on the outer side of the mill-pond, were washed out by the waves at high tide, and their bones were exposed along the beach, bleaching in the sun and whitening the shore. The whole shore, from Rennie's Point to Remsen's door-yard, and from his barn to Rapelje's farm, and the slopes of the hill, and the sand island, between the flood-gates and the mill-dam, were filled with the remains of these martyrs.

Johnson's Recollections.

Thus were thousands of our countrymen inhumanly and cowardly murdered. It is believed that not less than eleven thousand perished in the Old Jersey alone. How many were added to this number from the other ships, God only knows! The story is too dreadful to dwell upon. Were it not for the undoubted evidence of witnesses but recently deceased, and of historians, who

suffered in the hulks, "which things they saw, and of them were a part," and wrote from their own painful recollections and the monument of mouldering bones which lie here, cherished by us as the sacred "relics of freedom's martyrs," we might doubt the facts. Nay, it would be natural for us to hesitate to believe that our enemies were so unmanly and brutal. Without all this evidence, we would not be authorized to blacken the pages of the history of one of the most enlightened nations of the earth, with crimes, which, to relate in common terms, are sufficient to crimson the cheeks of her people for ages to come. In the language of one of our own noble officers, God grant that the record of such crimes may be opened up in heaven against our enemies, and not against us!

The knowledge of these things was not confined to the petty officers and guards; their superiors knew it; and the ministers of the English Government had knowledge of them. They were not the results of

Debate in Parliament on Mr. Fox's motion.

circumstances, nor the fruits of temporary passion. Their cruelty was a part of their policy, deliberately and remorselessly pursued. This was the just punishment of their rebellion, the patriots were told, and it was better than they deserved. You deserve to be hanged, Gen. Howe said, to Lieut. Dunscomb and his fellow prisoners, for your rebellion; and you shall all be hanged! "Hang, and be d—d," was Dunscomb's reply.

Thatcher's Jour. p.76. Note.

General Washington remonstrated against their cruel treatment, in a letter to Admiral Digby, which was filled with the most touching and noble sentiments. "If the fortune of war, sir, has thrown a number of these miserable people into your hands, I am certain your excellency's feelings for the men must induce you to proportion the ships, (if they *must* be confined on board ships,) to their accommodation and comfort, and not, by crowding them together in a few ships, bring on diseases which consign them by the half-dozen in a day to the grave."

Before this, on the 13th day of January, 1777, he wrote in the following terms to Howe: "I am sorry that I am under the disagreeable necessity to trouble your Lordship with a letter, almost wholly on the subject of the cruel treatment which our officers and men, in the naval department, who are unhappy enough to fall into your hands, receive on board the prison-ships in the harbour of New-York. Without descending to particulars, I shall ground my complaint upon the matter contained in the enclosed paper, which is an exact copy of an account of the usage of the prisoners, delivered to Congress by one Captain Gamble, lately a prisoner himself in New-York. If this account be true, of which I have no reason to doubt, as Captain Gamble is said to be a man of veracity, I call upon your Lordship to say, whether any treatment of your officers and seamen has merited so severe a retaliation. I am bold to say, it has not. * * * * And I hope upon making the proper inquiry, you will have the matter so regulated, that the

unhappy persons, in captivity, may not in the future have the miseries of cold, disease, and famine, added to their other misfortunes. You may call us rebels, and say that we deserve no better treatment; but, remember, my Lord, that supposing us rebels, we still have feelings equally as keen and sensible as loyalists, and will, if forced to it, most assuredly retaliate upon those, upon whom we look as the unjust invaders of our rights, liberties, and properties. I should not have said thus much; but my injured countrymen have long called upon me to endeavor to obtain redress of their grievances; and I should think myself as culpable as those who inflict such severities upon them, were I to continue silent." And, again, he writes: "Those who have lately been sent out, give the most shocking account of their barbarous usage, which their miserable, emaciated countenances confirm. * * * I would beg, that some certain rule of conduct towards prisoners may be settled; and, if you are determined to make captivity as distress-

ing as possible, let me know it, that we may be upon equal terms, for your conduct must and shall regulate mine." In closing this letter he says, "Most of the prisoners who have returned home, (this was by an exchange which had been agreed upon,) have informed me, that they were offered better treatment, provided they would enlist into your service. This, I believe, is unprecedented, and, if true, makes it still more unnecessary for me to apologize for the freedom of expression which I have used throughout this letter."

In 1782, Commissioner Skinner wrote to the infamous Sproat. After charging him with the basest falsehoods, he says, "I was refused permission to visit the prison-ships, for which I can conceive no other reason than your being ashamed to have these graves of our seamen seen by one who dared to represent the horrors of them to his countrymen."

During all this time, every attempt to relieve the sufferings of the prisoners, either

by their friends or on the part of the Government, was ingeniously defeated. If money or supplies was sent, they were appropriated by their jailors. If an exchange was agreed upon, the prisoners were not sent out, until they had been reduced to skeletons by starvation and disease. Thus, rendered unfit for future service, they returned, many of them only to find graves at home.

Washington's Protest to Howe.

And in order to increase their misery, and drive them to desperation, the prisoners were told by the English officers, that they were neglected by their Government—that exchange, except in a few instances, was refused; and that their sufferings resulted from their own stubbornness; and, if they persisted in it, they should suffer and die in their filth. This stubbornness, which so much excited the English, was evinced in their refusal to enlist in the service of the king, against their own country. If they would commit this vile act, they were informed that they could avoid the torture of the prison-ships, the insults, and starvation, and sick-

ness, and all the stages of their slow but certain death. "You are treated too well for rebels; you have not received half you deserve, and half you shall receive; but if you will enlist in His Majesty's service, you shall have victuals and clothing enough." This was the language used to our unfortunate seamen and soldiers. And to prove the assertion that there was still worse treatment in reserve for them, they put four of our wounded officers into a dirt cart, and drove them through the City of New-York, "as objects of derision, reviled as rebels, and treated with the utmost contempt;" while some were seated upon coffins, with ropes around their necks, and driven to the gallows, where they were derided and abused, and then driven back to prison. The British officer, Fraser, told others, if they did not join the English army, they should go to the dungeons and prison-ships, to perish and to *rot*, and their wives and children should be forced to starve in the public streets, and to curse them as the authors of their miserable

Thatcher's Journal, p. 76.

Fay's Address.

fate. In this instance, the souls of the listening heroes were touched, and they momentarily trembled under the terrible sentence; but love of country triumphed over love of family, and, as if moved by one impulse, this glorious band of patriots thundered in the astonished ears of their persecutors, "the prison-ships and death, or Washington and our country." Death, or the British service were the only alternatives; and the former, in almost every instance, was preferred. Coffin, and Dring, and others who suffered with them, say that the prisoners resolved to bear everything that their enemies might inflict, but never to desert their country for a service which their hearts detested.

It was this forced enlistment, that Washington characterized as "unprecedented," and he might have added, "a violation of the laws of nations." But it was as useless as it was contemptible. With an eye of proud disdain, and souls burning with the eternal fire of liberty, the prisoners spurned the in-

sulting offer, as the reward of treason. "Our country's liberty is dear to our souls," they could say, "it deserves a mighty sacrifice; let it be free, and our blood shall be avenged; it is for this we suffer, and for it we are willing to die." De Witt's Oration. Hist. of the Martyrs, page 91.

—— "Bodies fall by wild sword-law;
But who would force the Soul, tilts with a straw
Against a Champion cased in adamant."

This was the true nobility of patriotism—the mighty spirit of liberty triumphing over death—calm, resolute, unconquerable bravery, defying torture, and starvation, and loathsome disease, and the prospect of a neglected and forgotten grave. There was no prospect of glory to sustain them in their fearful trials—no excitement of battle, in which they might forget their danger and earn their death. Such men could not be conquered. Taken, imprisoned they might be; but conquered, never. Wounded, neglected, starved, hurled without mercy into these nauseous tombs of living victims, to die unhonored and unknown; and to be thrown upon the sand-

banks, a horrid repast for the birds of prey,—this, all this they saw, and felt to be impending; but, with prophetic eyes they also saw, beyond and above their individual sufferings, the image of their country's liberty rising triumphantly above their graves. Death might seal their career, but victory would crown their standard with eternal freedom. For this they had fought, and for it they were ready to die. Like the accomplished, the noble-hearted, and self-sacrificing Hale, whose life was so freely offered, and who lamented only, that he had but one life to lose for his country, they had considered their position,—had weighed the objects of the Revolution against the perils it involved, and were ready to meet its results; if not on the field of battle in deadly conflict, cheered by the shouts of victory; then and there, and in any way, so the principles of self-government were established, and the arm of tyranny was paralyzed.

Washington Papers, 7 Vol., page 549.

Pericles, in his eloquent oration over the bones of the Grecian heroes, said, the misery

which accompanies cowardice is far more grievous to a man of high spirit, than the unfelt death which comes upon him at once, in the time of his strength and of his hope for the common welfare. But these, our countrymen, died amidst starvation and poverty, where their strength was reduced by a slow and cruel death, wasted by degrees, in scenes of the most heart-rending character. If Grecian patriots merited a distinguished tomb, and inscriptive columns rearing their lofty heads to heaven, to tell of their glory, as well as that unwritten memorial of the heart, which all good men keep of their fellows; what, I ask, is due to the unnumbered heroes and martyrs, whose bones lie mouldering here, unhonored even by the slightest memorial!

Our free institutions—this great and prosperous Republic, with its social, political and religious liberties—are monuments to their memory; and God grant that they may continue so forever! But here, on the spot consecrated to liberty by the life of the im-

mortal Hale, and nurtured by the blood of the unnumbered and unnamed victims of barbarity, who "died in vindication of the rights of man," there is no material Monument, the evidence of their country's remembrance and gratitude—no stone, bearing the records of their patriotic devotion to principle, and of their more than heroic deaths!

☞ On page 23, eleventh line from the top, in part of the edition, *clothing* is erroneously printed for the word *food*.

CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I.

This Association shall be called "The Martyrs' Monument Association."

ARTICLE II.

The object of this Association is, to erect a suitable Monument to the memory of those who died martyrs to the Revolution, in the British Prison-Ships in the Wallabout Bay.

ARTICLE III.

The affairs, assets, property and powers of this Association shall be managed and exercised by a Board of Directors, consisting of one from each State and Territory in the Union, one from each Senatorial District in the State of New-York, and not less than thirty from the County of Kings, in the State of New-York, who shall continue in office one year, or until others are duly elected; and, whenever a vacancy in the Board shall occur, the directors shall fill the same by electing a Director from the State or District to which the member causing such vacancy belonged.

ARTICLE IV.

The Board of Directors shall have power to appoint a President, a Vice-President, a Recording Secretary, a Corresponding

Secretary, and a Treasurer, from their own number, to hold their respective offices for one year, or until others are appointed in their stead; and to appoint such other officers and agents as from time to time may become necessary to aid them in the performance of their trust; to remove them at pleasure; to prescribe their respective duties; and to make such By-Laws, Rules and Regulations, for the government of their own Board, the management and direction of their business, the erection, maintenance, preservation, regulation and custody of the said Monument, as they may, from time to time, judge necessary and expedient; and the said Board shall take from the Treasurer a bond, with one or more sureties, such as shall be approved by them, by resolution of said Board, for the faithful performance of his duties; and from other officers and agents, such security as the said Board may think proper.

ARTICLE V.

So soon as the said Board may deem it expedient, it shall be competent to purchase, or otherwise acquire, ground, and commence the erection of the said Monument, and to make contracts therefor: Provided, however, that no contract shall be made, or liability contracted, for an amount exceeding the sum at such time in the hands of the Treasurer, and not otherwise appropriated. And the President of the said Board is hereby designated as the officer and agent of the Association to whom conveyances of Real Estate shall be made; and to hold the same in trust, and to convey the same, on behalf of the Association, in such manner and for such purposes as the said Board of Directors shall determine.

ARTICLE VI.

The Board of Directors shall cause all their proceedings to be recorded in a book to be kept for that purpose; which book shall be open at all reasonable hours for the inspection of all persons who may have contributed to the funds or property of the Association.

ARTICLE VII.

No amendment to this Constitution shall be made, unless proposed by fifteen Directors; nor unless notice of such proposed amendment shall have been given in a meeting of the Board at least one month previous to its adoption being moved; nor unless adopted by the concurrence of twenty-five members of the Board, duly convened.

BY-LAWS.

I.

Meetings: when and where held.

A STATED Meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held on the first Tuesday in September of each year; and on the second Monday of every month during the year, at such hour as the Board shall from time to time determine. Occasional meetings may be held at any time, at the call of the President, or request of any five members of the Board.

II.

Presiding officer.

At all meetings of the Directors, the President shall preside, if he be present; but, if he be absent, the chair shall be taken by the Vice-President. If neither of those officers be present, a Chairman, *pro tempore*, shall be appointed from the Directors present.

III.

Quorum.

Twelve Directors, duly assembled, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of ordinary business; but a vote of eighteen Directors shall be necessary to elect a Director to fill a vacancy in the Board.

IV.

Order of Business.

The Order of Business shall be as follows:

1. Calling the Roll of Members.
2. Reading and approval of Minutes.
3. Communications from the President.
4. Do. do. Corresponding Secretary.
5. Report of Recording Secretary.
6. Do. Treasurer.
7. Do. Finance Committee.
8. Do. Building "
9. Reports of Special Committees.
10. Miscellaneous Business.

V.

Motions to be in writing.

No motion shall be considered as before the Board, unless seconded, and, when required by any Director present, reduced to writing.

VI.

Limitation of Debate.

No Director may speak more than twice on the same question, without leave of the Board; nor more than once, in any case, until every member choosing to speak shall have spoken.

VII.

Questions; how decided.

All questions shall be put by the Chairman, and decided *viva voce*. On the request of any Director, the ayes and noes shall be called upon any question, and shall be entered on the Minutes.

VIII.

Committees; how appointed.

All Committees shall be appointed by the Chair, except as herein otherwise directed; or, unless otherwise ordered by the Board, at the time.

IX.

Rules of Order

The Rules of Order at all Meetings of the Board, except as herein otherwise provided, shall be, as nearly as practicable, those of the Senate of the United States.

X.

Vacancies; how filled.

Elections of Directors shall be, in all cases, by ballot. No person shall be elected to fill a vacancy in the Board of Directors, who shall not have been nominated at a previous meeting of the Board—such nomination being entered on the Minutes.

The notice of every meeting, at which an election of a Director, or of Directors, is to be held, shall specify such fact.

XI.

Finance Committee;

A Finance Committee of three members shall be chosen from among the Directors, at least once in each year.

XII.

Building Committee;

A Building Committee, consisting of three members, shall be chosen from among the Directors, at least once in each year.

XIII.

Standing Committees; how chosen.

The Finance and the Building Committees, (after the first,) shall each, in all cases, be chosen by ballot, on the second Tuesday in September; or, in case of no quorum attending on that day, at the first meeting thereafter. Vacancies occurring in either of these committees, may be filled at any subsequent meeting. Any member of either of these committees may be removed before the expiration of the year for which he was chosen, by a vote of eighteen Directors, taken by ayes and noes, and entered upon the Minutes.

XIV.

Fiscal year.

The fiscal year of the Association shall commence on the second Tuesday in September; on which day the term of all officers shall expire; but they shall continue to perform the duties of their respective offices until others are elected.

XV.

Directors not to be interested in loans or contracts.

No Director or officer of this Association shall, directly or indirectly, be interested in the loan of, or be security for, any money borrowed from the Association, or for the performance of any contract made with the same, or interested in any contract with it, or in the sale of any materials to the Association, or in services rendered to the same, other than the discharge of the duties of their respective offices.

XVI.

Finance Committees' duties.

The Finance Committee shall specially attend to the raising of funds for the objects of the Association; devising the various modes by which such funds shall be raised; appointing collectors, if necessary; determining the amount and the mode of their compensation, (subject, however, to the control of the Board of Directors;) drafting and addressing the various letters and circulars asking aid; counselling and advising with the Treasurer as to the safe keeping and making productive all unexpended sums; devising the necessary checks to insure the faithful conduct and honest co-operation of all subordinate agents. They shall audit all bills and charges for the current and incidental expenses of the Association, and for salaries. They shall determine upon the sufficiency of all sureties that may be taken or required in behalf of the Association, (except the sureties of the Treasurer, which shall be determined by the Board of Directors.) They shall, from time to time, examine, and shall report, at least once a year, to the Board

of Directors, their opinion upon the sufficiency of *all* sureties (as well of the Treasurer as of others) taken in behalf of the Association, specifying in such report the names of all sureties, the amount and object for which bound, and such other particulars as they may think proper.

XVII.

Building Committees' duties.

After the adoption of the plan by the Board of Directors, (which shall require a vote of eighteen Directors,) the Building Committee shall have the immediate charge and supervision of all that relates to the actual erection of the monument; subject, however, in all respects, to the control and approval of the Board of Directors. They shall prepare and attend to the proper execution of all contracts authorized by the Board of Directors to be made with the builders, mechanics, artists and artizans that may be employed, or for any materials to be furnished. They shall, when thereunto required by a vote of the Board, make detailed and specific reports of the progress of the work to the Board of Directors.

XVIII.

Contracts; how to be made.

No contract for labor, materials, or any other object, (except the compensation to the collectors,) that may involve an expenditure of over one hundred dollars, shall be made, except in pursuance of a vote of the Board of Directors. The Building Committee may, however, make contracts for labor, or materials, for a less amount than one hundred dollars, (without a previous vote of the Board,) provided that the aggregate of all such contracts by the Committee, without a previous vote of the Board, shall not exceed the sum of three hundred dollars in any one month; and all such contracts shall be reported to the Board at its next meeting after their being made, and shall be noted on the Minutes.

All contracts made by or in behalf of this Association,

shall be in writing, under the Seal of the Association, signed by the President, or, in case of his absence or inability to act, or of a vacancy in that office, by the Vice-President, attested by the Recording Secretary, and endorsed "approved," and signed by the Chairman and one other member of the Building Committee.

XIX.

Treasurer's duties.

The Treasurer shall have the custody of all moneys belonging to the Association, which moneys he shall keep deposited in such Bank or Trust Company in the County of Kings, as shall be selected by the Finance Committee, in the name of "The Martyrs' Monument Association," subject to draft by the Treasurer of the said Association for the time being. He shall pay no money, and shall draw no draft upon any Bank or Trust Company in which the moneys of the Association shall be deposited, except upon a warrant or requisition drawn to the order of the party to whom said payment is intended to be made, specifying in general terms the object of the appropriation, and signed by the President, (or, in case of his absence or inability to act, or of a vacancy in that office, by the Vice President,) and by the Recording Secretary, and countersigned by the Chairman and one other member of the Building Committee; or, in case the payment be intended for the compensation of any collector, agent, or officer of the Association, or for the current or incidental expenses of the Association, then such warrant or requisition shall specify such fact, and be countersigned by the Chairman and one other member of the Finance Committee.

XX.

Treasurer to make reports.

The Treasurer shall keep accurate accounts of all his receipts and disbursements, and shall preserve all vouchers relating to such receipts and disbursements, and shall present to the Board of Directors, at each monthly meeting,

a statement of the amount in the Treasury; and shall, on the first Tuesday of September, in each year, and as often as required by a vote of the Board, present a full and detailed statement, in writing, of all receipts and disbursements, and of all the monied transactions of the Association, since the preceding annual report, exhibiting the actual condition of the Treasury, with a particular statement of all the money, property and effects of the Association in his hands, or under his custody.

XXI.

Recording Secretary's duties.

The Recording Secretary shall keep the minutes of the proceedings of the Board of Directors, causing them to be fairly engrossed in a book kept for that purpose, signed or certified by the President, Vice-President, or Chairman *pro tempore*. He shall, in writing, notify the Directors of all meetings of the Board, at least two days before such meetings, and shall issue notices for all extraordinary meetings when required, in writing, to do so by the President, or any five Directors. He shall have the custody and charge of the Seal, and of all the books, papers, correspondence, contracts, deeds, and documents belonging to the Association; and he shall assist all the committees, and shall attend and act as Secretary of the Finance Committee, and (generally) perform all such duties as shall from time to time be charged upon him by an order or resolution of the Board. He shall keep a book, in which he shall enter, in alphabetical order, the names of all contributors to the Association, specifying the amount of the contribution, the name of the Agent, Collector, or Director through whom received, and the date when actually received into the Treasury—which book shall, at all times, be open to the inspection of any Director or officer, and also of any contributor to the Association. He shall, also, keep general books of account of all the monied transactions of the As-

sociation, which shall, at all reasonable hours, be open to the inspection of any Director.

XXII.

Corresponding Secretary's duties.

The Corresponding Secretary shall conduct the correspondence of the Board, under the inspection of the President.

XXIII.

Collectors' and Agents duties.

The Collectors or Agents of the Association, (if any,) shall keep regular accounts, in such form and manner as the Finance Committee shall, from time to time, direct, of all moneys collected by them, with the names of the contributors; and shall give receipts in such form as the said Committee shall in like manner direct, to all such contributors; and, generally, shall be under the direction of the Finance Committee.

XXIV.

Seal of the Association.

The Seal of the Association shall not be affixed to any document whatever, on behalf of the Association, except by special resolution of the Board.

XXV.

Alteration of By-laws.

No repeal, alteration, or amendment of these By-laws shall be made, except at a meeting at which twenty Directors shall be present, nor unless at least eighteen Directors vote in favor thereof.

All propositions for the repeal, alteration, or amendment of the By-laws, shall be submitted in writing, and entered upon the minutes; and shall lie over for consideration until the then next stated meeting of the Board, unless, by an unanimous vote, (there being eighteen Directors present,) the Board shall determine to proceed immediately to the consideration thereof. The vote upon every question for a repeal, alteration or amendment of the By-laws, shall be taken by ayes and noes, and entered upon the minutes.

CIRCULAR.

Monument to the Martyrs of the Prison-Ships of the Revolution.

Notwithstanding the frequent repetition of a common sentiment, that "Republics are always ungrateful," the undersigned hold the belief that there is a patriotic spirit in the land, to build monuments to commemorate such deeds of fortitude, heroism and devotion of our sires as are without a parallel, and which constitute the best inheritance of the Republic.

Bunker Hill has her shaft reaching toward the skies to do honor to those sons of freedom who fell early in the revolutionary struggle. This is right and noble; but, still more than those patriots, do the martyrs of the Prison-Ships demand a monument. They fell, not in the warm blood of conflict. They perished under every privation, and the prolonged infliction of systematic cruelty. They endured hunger, thirst, pestilence and death, solely for the hope of liberty to their posterity. They were consigned by thousands to nameless graves, on the shores of the Wallabout; and while their names are lost, or preserved only in the household records of the Union, their fame and sacrifice should be perpetuated by a column raised by grateful freemen over their commingled ashes.

It is stated in Ramsay's History of the Revolution, and is abundantly confirmed by other authorities, that not less than eleven thousand seamen, soldiers and citizens, perished during

the Revolution, in the JERSEY Prison-Ship alone, and were buried in the Wallabout sands. Add to these the victims of those other hulks, the JOHN, the SCORPION, the STROMBOLI, and the HUNTER, and others which lay in our waters, and the number martyred in the Prison-Ships, altogether, swells to more than sixteen thousand.

During the Revolution, almost every hamlet in the nation throbbed with sympathy for friends or relatives, confined in those living tombs; and, soon after that event, measures were taken toward a monument over the remains of those who perished therein, which we shall briefly review:

Many of the corpses buried in the sands of the hills along the Wallabout shore, in shallow graves, not long after became exposed by the elements. In digging away the ground within and adjacent to the Brooklyn Navy Yard in 1802, immense numbers were disinterred. These were carefully preserved by John Jackson, Esq., the owner of the grounds in the vicinity, and an appeal was made to the Tammany Society, or Columbian Order, to provide them a place of sepulture. On the 31st of January, 1803, an eloquent memorial, praying an appropriation toward a monument, was prepared by a Committee of Tammany Society, and sent to the learned and distinguished Dr. Samuel L. Mitchel, then a member of the House of Representatives, by whom it was presented to that body. That branch of the Legislature took action upon it, but without any decisive or effective result.

The subject then rested until February 1st, 1808, when it was again taken up by the Tammany Society, and a Wallabout Committee appointed to take immediate measures for the honorable sepulture of the remains, of which upwards of thirteen hogsheads had been collected. A deed of conveyance of the land required for the vault was given by John Jackson, Esq. This Committee initiated an extensive correspondence, and the feelings of the Nation turned with enthusiasm toward the occasion of their deposit.

On the 13th April, 1808, a military and civic procession marched through the then village of Brooklyn, and laid the corner stone of the vault with imposing ceremonies. An oration was delivered on the occasion by Joseph D. Fay, Esq.

On the 26th May, 1808, the vault being completed, a civic and military pageant took place, which was up to that time entirely without precedent in the Union for splendor and impressiveness. In this pageant, Daniel D. Tompkins, Governor of the State, and De Witt Clinton, Mayor of the City of New-York, participated, with the principal officers of New-York and Brooklyn, and a vast array of public and official characters. It is recounted that upwards of thirty thousand persons witnessed these ceremonies. An appropriate prayer was made by the Rev. Ralph Williston, and an oration delivered by the Rev. Dr. Benjamin De Witt.

The remains were then deposited in the vault, on Jackson-street, (now Hudson Avenue, adjoining the Navy Yard,) where they have since reposed—a place then acceptable, but, by changes, rendered no longer fit to retain them. It was intended that collections should be made, and steps be rapidly taken toward the erection and completion, on that site, of a suitable monument.

Twice *efforts* towards collections were made. The State of New-York appropriated $1000 to the object, which, it is believed, is yet in the State Treasury, to be realized, it is hoped, with increase. Individuals proffered donations, but they have never been called for. No money has as yet gone to the object; no work has been done; no corner-stone even been laid! The time has arrived when further delay in the payment of the debt of national gratitude, in the form of a monument, to those martyrs, would be a shame and reproach to the American name.

We should not omit here to say that for the preservation and guardianship of the remains of the Prison-Ship martyrs, much is due to that distinguished Revolutionary patriot, Benjamin Romaine, himself a sufferer in the days of the Revolution, though not unto death, from imprisonment similar to that of the martyrs themselves. After many years of devotion to their care, his own remains now repose in the same vault, and are entitled to equal honor.

Since that 26th day of May, 1808, these precious deposits, in the trust, on the behalf of our country, of Brooklyn and New-York, have frequently been alluded to on patriotic occasions; and as, at such times, the riches and the glory of our free inherit-

ance—the purchase, in proportionate measure, of the untold sacrifices and sufferings of that heroic company—

> * * * the royal and the brave who thus lie
> In the blank earth—

have formed the subject of special consideration, citizens have recognized the obligation not to dishonor them by indifference or neglect. Yet, we witness no effective result. Even yet, "there is no material monument, the evidence of their country's remembrance and gratitude!—no stone, bearing the record of their patriotic devotion to principle, and their more than heroic deaths!" But a fitting site for the monument has been designated—the lofty summit of Fort Green—a site consecrated in the annals of the Revolution, and therefore most apposite for the purpose—commanding the Wallabout, where the martyrdom was suffered, and with whose soil the dust of the martyrs is blended; and a movement is now in progress, designed to secure the funds necessary to erect, upon that site, over the remains of those brave and patriotic men, the too long-delayed token of their country's gratitude.

At an enthusiastic meeting of citizens, recently held on this subject, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:—

Resolved, That the time has arrived when the Cities of New-York and Brooklyn cannot, without criminality, longer delay the necessary efforts for rearing the monument to the Martyrs of the Prison Ships.

Resolved, That justice to the memory of these martyrs will inspire heroism in the children of the Republic—that their sufferings, fortitude, devotion and self-sacrifice, will challenge comparison with the noblest examples of Roman, Grecian or Spartan heroism, and should be commemorated and perpetuated as the best and dearest inheritance of a free people.

Resolved, That the sacred trust of the ashes of a larger body of heroes than fell in all the battles of the Revolution, is one of exalted honor, as of persevering duty; and that the people of two leading cities of the Union—one of them the metropolis thereof—cannot fail to discharge this trust faithfully and energetically.

Resolved, That as these ashes embrace the commingled remains of citizens of the Republic from all the original States of the Union, our brethren of all the States are peculiarly and properly called upon to aid us with patriotic zeal in raising contributions for the object.

Resolved, That while our great reliance is upon individual effort and contributions, and the influence of a genuine, enthusiastic and wide-spread

American sentiment, this effort should be aided by Congress and the State Legislatures.

Resolved, That the thanks of all American citizens are due to Benjamin Romaine, who was himself a prisoner of the Revolution, for his careful guardianship of these remains for many years in the tomb where his own ashes now repose; and that, in our opinion, if congenial to his family, his remains should be with theirs in their final resting-place.

An Association has been formed, and a Board of Directors constituted—in which each Senatorial District in the State of New-York, and each State and Territory in the Union is represented—to act efficiently in this great interest.

The undersigned, President, and the Finance Committee of that Association, having had imposed on them the duty of raising the needed funds, desire to invite to the object the attention of their countrymen, and to afford to each one, if possible, the opportunity to co-operate, by gifts and efforts, in the payment of such nobly earned, but too long neglected, memorial tribute. Fifty thousand dollars is the least amount of expenditure contemplated; seventy-five thousand, it is hoped, will be contributed, that the monument may be worthy of the object and of us.

To their countrymen at large this Committee address themselves, in a confidence which the object inspires, that they will become enlisted for the successful accomplishment of this great and glorious undertaking.

We adopt the energetic words of an olden patriot, upon an occasion not dissimilar to the present, accommodated to our case: "Oh, Americans, these dead bodies ask no monument. Their monument arose when they fell; and so long as liberty shall have defenders, their names will be imperishable. But, oh, Americans, it is we who need a monument to their honor,—we, who survive, not having yet proved that we, too, could die for our country and be immortal. We need a monument, that the widows and the children of the dead, and the whole country, and the shades of the departed, and all future ages, may see and know that we honor patriotism, and virtue, and liberty, and truth; for, next to performing a great deed, and achieving a noble character, is to honor such characters and deeds."

Our treasury will be replete, if all alike will do *what they can*, and the proposed work will go vigorously on to the glory of justice, patriotism, and our common inheritance.

Contributions may be remitted, in the name of the donors, to our Treasurer—assurance being hereby given that if, from insufficiency of funds, the proposed work should not proceed, the money forwarded shall be faithfully returned to the sources from which it may have come, an alternative, the necessity for which, it is our confidence, Americans will not permit.

GEORGE TAYLOR, *President.*
I. H. SMITH,
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JAMES MCBRIDE,

BROOKLYN, L. I., *August 6th*, 1855.

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